

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF  
**COMMERCE**  
**NEWS**

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20230

NATIONAL  
OCEANIC AND  
ATMOSPHERIC  
ADMINISTRATION

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE, PARTNERS LAUNCH  
FLOOD SAFETY AWARENESS CAMPAIGN**



TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN™, a new safety campaign calling attention to the dangers of flood and flash flooding was launched today at 9:30 AM MDT during a press conference in Fort Worth, Texas, hosted by National Weather Service (NWS) Southern Region Director Bill Proenza, the Federal Alliance for Safe Homes (FLASH) and others NWS partners.

A national press release is available through the National Weather Service Albuquerque office internet home page at <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/ABQ>. Additional details may also be found at the TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN™ web site at <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/tadd>.

The purpose of this new awareness campaign is to reduce the annual national and local deaths and injuries due to flood or flash flooding by enhancing the public awareness of the dangers of driving or walking into flooded areas.

According to storm data records for the 30 year period from 1972 to 2001, the national average annual death toll for floods (127) exceeded average annual deaths from lightning (73), tornadoes (68) or hurricanes (16).

Despite recent years with extended dry weather for many areas of the state, New Mexico has recorded at least 188 significant flash flood events and 7 flash flood fatalities between 1996 and 2002. All regions of New Mexico are prone to flash flooding.

TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN™ will be a focus of the New Mexico Flash Flood and Lightning Awareness Week June 23-27, 2003 which coincides with National Lightning Safety Awareness Week.

News media and New Mexico emergency managers are invited to contact one of the following National Weather Service offices for details on the TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN™ campaign and its relevance to New Mexico. Emergency managers may also schedule local SKYWARN severe weather spotter training through these contacts.

Northern and Eastern New Mexico... (Albuquerque office)

Keith Hayes - Warning Coordination Meteorologist  
(505) 243-0702

South Central New Mexico... (El Paso area office)

John Fausett - Warning Coordination Meteorologist  
(505) 589-4088

Southeastern New Mexico... (Midland TX office)

Pat Vesper - Warning Coordination Meteorologist  
(915) 563-5006

Detailed safety information about preparing for and dealing with weather-related disasters is available online at both FLASH and National Weather Service web sites, <http://www.flash.org> and <http://www.srh.weather.gov> .

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Turn Around, Don't Drown™ is a Trademark used by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service.